

UN Climate Summit 2014

23 September, 2014

**Statement by His Excellency the Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and
Energy
of Portugal**

Mr. Jorge Moreira da Silva

at the

Plenary on national actions and ambition announcements

Mr. Chair,

Dear colleagues,

Over the last 15 years I have attended over almost all climate change summits and UN COPs. And for me it is clear that we cannot afford to pay the political price of another failure in Paris, next year. Citizens won't accept it. Therefore, using the time ahead of us to foster the global dialogue and to do our homework in time for Lima and for Paris is vital. That's why this initiative of the UN SG is so important.

From our side, there's no room for hesitation. This is the time for leadership and responsibility. We have no excuses. According to all relevant and consistent scientific and economic assessment, addressing climate change is urgent but it is also manageable and it can be cost-effective.

How can we foster a comprehensive, fair and cost-effective climate deal?

The European Union has led world efforts on climate. We have overachieved on 2020, we have led the way on carbon pricing and markets, and we have been providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

Therefore, we (the European Union and Portugal) now have serious expectations regarding the future 2015 agreement. We argue in favour of the adoption of a single global, rules-based, legally binding agreement, preferably in the form of a new Protocol, applicable to all, which aims to ensure the global temperature increase stays below 2° C.

This agreement should foster climate resilient and sustainable development as well as facilitate adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change. Furthermore, it should also address the financial gap and foster a global carbon market, developing and linking national, regional and sectorial cap-and-trade schemes.

This ambition at the international level is fully in line with our national vision. Portugal is one of the countries advocating for more ambitious action on climate mitigation and, simultaneously, one of the countries in Europe that will suffer significantly from the impacts of climate change, mostly on the coastline and in what regards our water resources.

Portugal achieved the 2012 climate targets, will overachieve 2020-targets and is advocating very ambitious targets for EU and Portugal by 2030.

Today Portugal has already reached 27% of renewable energy on final consumption and almost 60% of renewable energy on electricity supply. And we are ready to go further.

After a critical period of external assistance, which has come to an end last May, Portugal is now mainstreaming green growth as a key driver towards sustainable development, to promote a low carbon economy, high efficiency in resource use, competitiveness and jobs.

We launched, last week, an ambitious long term commitment - the Compromise for Green Growth - which sets 13 quantified targets for 2020 and 2030 and 83 new initiatives, which include new funding mechanisms, green taxation, green jobs, resource productivity, energy efficiency, electric mobility, spatial planning, forest management, water resource efficiency, air and water quality and biodiversity.

Let me outline 5 key targets being addressed in this Compromise for Green Growth:

- 1- Increase Green Value Added by an annual rate of 5%;
- 2- Foster green jobs by an annual rate of 4%, doubling in 2030 our current number of green jobs;
- 3- Reduce GHG emissions by 30-40% until 2030, compared to 2005, depending on EU energy interconnection projects;
- 4- Increase renewable energy share to 40% by 2030;
- 5- Increase resource productivity by 30% by 2030.

In the context of the EU 2030 framework for climate and energy policies, Portugal supports an integrated approach focused on Greenhouse House Gas reductions and on the promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and interconnections. This is an approach that brings Europe a triple dividend - in terms of competitiveness and jobs, moving towards a more resilient low carbon economy, and energy security.

A diverse set of complementary policies and measures will be essential to mobilize investments and to realize a low-carbon economy. Portugal believes the diffusion of renewable energy should be widely promoted.

Indeed, it is through the cost-effective development of its own endogenous renewable resources that we will be able to free ourselves of the energy security-high energy prices bind, as it has the potential to lower exposure to outside factors that are beyond its control, such as fossil fuels prices in the international markets and access to resources in third countries.

Mr. Chair,

Dear colleagues,

Time is running for COP 21 in Paris, but above all, time is running for our fight against climate change. We are very confident on the outcome of this Summit, and we would like to congratulate once again Mr. Ban Ki Moon for this initiative.

Thank you.